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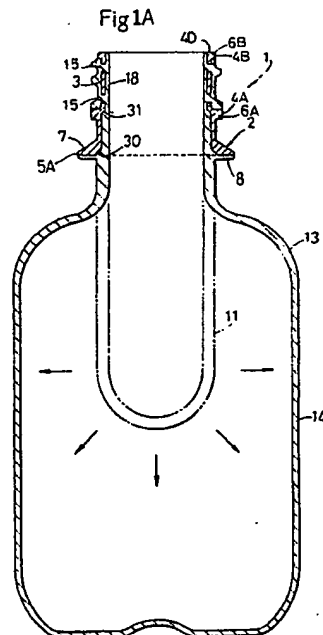
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54 **Bottle neck structure and manufacturing method therefor.**

57 A bottle neck structure (1) of a synthetic resin bottle with a preliminarily molded synthetic resin core member (2) embedded therein is disclosed. The bottle neck structure comprises the resin core member (2) which has a cylindrical body (3) constituting the wall of a bottle neck and a flange (7) constituting a support ring of the bottle neck, at least one exposed surface to be in contact with a neck mold when a bottle preform is molded, and a plurality of through-holes (15) formed in the circumferential wall of the cylindrical body.



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BOTTLE MOUTH STRUCTURE AND A MANUFACTURING METHOD THEREFOR

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to an improved mouth structure of synthetic resin bottles.

Synthetic resin bottles are coming into increasing use in recent years. Particularly, polyethyleneterephthalate (PET) bottles, produced by biaxially blow-stretching a preform, are widely used due to their transparency, gas-barrier performance and strength.

However, PET bottles have a problem in thermal resistance. That is they deform when filled with hot liquid such as juice after high temperature sterilization or when they are exposed to a hot shower or are immersed in a hot bath for sterilization after filling with, for example, carbonated natural juice.

Conventionally, to avoid this problem, biaxially stretched bottle drum bodies are heat set (Japanese Laid-Open Utility Model Publication No. SHO63-194115) or multiple-layered with a thermally resistant resin (Japanese Laid-Open Patent Publication No. SHO63-307054 and Japanese Laid-Open Utility Model Publication No. SHO63-194116).

The bottom of the bottle, which is hard to stretch, is treated for crystallization and blushing or is multiple-layered with a thermally resistant resin, thereby providing thermal resistance and rigidity.

The bottle mouth is not stretched biaxially. The bottle mouth is treated for thermal resistance using, for example, one of the following methods:

According to the inventions disclosed in Japanese Patent Publications Nos. SHO61-35056, SHO59-33101 and SHO54-68385, the bottle mouth is provided with thermal resistance by thermal treatment for crystallization and blushing.

According to the inventions disclosed in Japanese Laid-Open Patent Publication No. SHO63-307054, Japanese Laid-Open Utility Model Publication No. SHO63-194115 and Japanese Laid-Open Patent Publication No. 61-259946, when a bottle preform is molded, thermal resistant resin and PET resin are co-injected to form a multiple-layer bottle mouth, thereby providing thermal resistance to the bottle mouth.

According to the invention disclosed in Japanese Laid-Open Patent Publication No. SHO58-149242, a bottle preform is molded in two steps: in the first step, a threaded outer cylindrical piece for a bottle mouth is molded with a thermally resistant resin, and then the inner mouth layer integral with the threaded cylindrical piece and the bottle drum body are injection-molded with bottle resin material, using the threaded cylindrical piece as a part

of a mouth mold. In this manner, a bore and bottle drum body are integrally formed with each other and with the threaded cylindrical piece.

According to the inventions disclosed in Japanese Laid-Open Patent Publications Nos. SHO54-72180 and SHO55-89056, a thermally resistant resin insert piece is molded in advance. A bottle mouth is molded with bottle resin material surrounding the insert piece when the bottle preform is molded.

According to the inventions disclosed in Japanese Laid-Open Patent Publications Nos. HEI 1-124545 and HEI 1-118420, a thermally resistant resin core member, comprising a cylindrical body constituting the wall of a bottle mouth and a flange constituting a support ring is molded in advance. The resin core member is set in the mold at the position for the bottle mouth. The resin core member is embedded in bottle resin material so that the cylindrical body and the flange are sandwiched between bottle resin material layers when a bottle preform is molded. In this way, the resin core member provides thermal resistance to the bottle mouth including the support ring.

According to the prior art disclosed in Laid-Open Patent Publication No. HEI 1-124545, a preform mold includes pins slidably projecting from and retracting into the mold. When a bottle preform is molded, the pins are projected to hold the resin core member within the mold.

According to the disclosure in Laid-Open Patent Publication No. HEI 1-118420, the resin core member includes a spacer projecting therefrom. The spacer is clamped in the mold to hold the resin core member in place before a bottle preform is molded.

According to the two foregoing inventions, bottle resin material flows on the inner surface the cylindrical body of the resin core member and is fed to the outer circumferential surface of the cylindrical body through holes formed positioned where the flange projects from the cylindrical body.

Conventional techniques for providing thermal resistance to a synthetic resin bottle, particularly to the bottle mouth, as mentioned above, have a number of disadvantages as follows.

The disadvantages of the art disclosed in the Japanese Patent Publication No. SHO61-35056 and others in which the bottle mouth is crystallized and blushed by thermal treatment include the following: The number of manufacturing processes is increased due to the thermal treatment process. The crystallized portions are brittle and exhibit degraded impact strength. The dimensional stability is degraded due to contraction. And the crystallized

portions are not transparent.

The disadvantages of the art disclosed in Japanese Laid-Open Patent Publication No. SHO63-307054, and others that use co-injection of thermally resistant resin and PET resin to mold a bottle preform having a bottle mouth with a two-layered structure, have the following disadvantages:

Due to the differences of the two resins in glass transition point, melting point and viscosity at a particular molding temperature, it is extremely difficult to control the flow rate of the two co-injected resin materials in the boundary of the two resin layers and to ensure appropriate resin flow to appropriate areas.

The disadvantages of the art disclosed in the Japanese Laid-Open Patent Publication No. SHO58-149242 in which a threaded outer piece for a bottle mouth is formed separately, and of the art disclosed in the Japanese Laid Open Patent Publication No. SHO54-72180 in which an insert piece for a bottle mouth is surrounded by thermally resistant resin, are as follows:

The piece may become separated from the bottle resin material due to the difference in thermal expansion between the piece and bottle resin materials. If the piece is joined firmly with the bottle resin material, the bottle mouth may be cracked by the differential thermal expansion. Specifically, according to this prior art, the piece is joined to the bottle resin material only at the inner or outer side. Therefore, if hot liquid is poured into the bottle, the bottle resin may be separated from the piece due to the difference in thermal expansion between the piece and bottle resin materials.

The bottle mouth obtained by the invention disclosed in the Japanese Laid-Open Patent Publication No. HEI 1-118420, in which a thermally resistant resin core member comprising a cylindrical body and a flange is embedded in the bottle resin material, has solved most of the problems of the above prior art. However, since the bottle resin material is led from inside to outside the cylindrical body through the holes positioned where the flange projects from the cylindrical body, the resin material outside the cylindrical body flows at a different rate from that inside the cylindrical body. As a result, differential pressure is produced between the outer and inner resin layers of the bottle mouth. The differential pressure together with the heat of the bottle resin material itself causes the insert piece to be distorted, bent or deformed.

OBJECT AND SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

It is an object of the present invention to provide an improved bottle mouth structure of a synthetic resin bottle, which has improved thermal

resistance and is free from the above-mentioned problems of the prior art.

The present invention provides a bottle mouth structure with a preliminarily formed synthetic resin core member embedded therein. The resin core member comprises a cylindrical body constituting the wall of a bottle mouth, a flange constituting the support ring of the bottle mouth, at least one exposed surface portion to be in contact with a mouth mold when a bottle preform is molded, and a plurality of through-holes formed in the circumferential wall of the cylindrical body.

The cylindrical body of the resin core member is preferably a plate having a plurality of through-holes therein. Alternatively, it may be a column train, mesh or lattice.

In these alternative cases, the openings in the column train, mesh or lattice serve as the through-holes.

To ensure a uniform pressure in the inner and outer layers of the resin core member, the configuration of the resin core member and the arrangement of the through-holes in the wall of the cylindrical body must be selected so that the resin for the bottle is allowed to flow at as uniform a rate as possible from inside to outside the resin core member.

Specifically, for a plate cylindrical body having through-holes formed in the plate, the diameter of each through-hole is preferably 1mm or more to ensure smooth flow of bottle resin material and to ensure a uniform pressure in the inner and outer resin layers of the cylindrical body.

For smooth flow of bottle resin material, it is preferable that the downward-facing inside edge of the cylindrical body of the resin core member be chamfered. More specifically, the downward-facing inside edge is preferably rounded to have a radius of at least 0.5mm, or is tapered upward so that the inside radius of the cylindrical body, measured at the taper starting edge is at least 0.5mm larger than the inside radius measured at the taper end edge.

To minimize the amount of resin required to form a bottle, a step may be formed in the inner wall of the cylindrical body. In this case, it is also preferable to chamfer the step edge in the same way as described above for the downward-facing inside edge.

When a bottle preform is formed, bottle resin material flows on the inner surface of the resin core member. To ensure smooth resin and a uniform flow rate of the bottle resin material from inside to outside the resin core member through the through-holes, the resin passage width inside the resin core member, that is, the gap between the inner surface of the resin core member and the core mold is preferably at least 0.5mm.

The through-holes should be spaced apart substantially uniformly in the circumferential direction and should be oriented toward the centre of the resin core member. However, when the resin core member is injection molded in a split mold, the need for through-holes requires a complicated, and expensive, split mold. Therefore, the through-holes are preferably arranged and oriented in the following manner to ensure uniform distribution of bottle resin material in the outer layer of the cylindrical body.

First, supposing the cylindrical body of the resin core member is divided by a hypothetical partition into equal hypothetical segments, it is preferable that the total open area of the through-holes in each hypothetical segment be substantially the same.

Secondly, the arrangement of the through-holes in each hypothetical segment is preferably symmetrical with respect to the hypothetical partition.

Finally, it is preferable that the through-holes be spaced apart substantially uniformly in both vertical and circumferential directions and that the open area of all through-holes be substantially equal. Further, like a mesh or lattice, the distance between any two vertically adjacent through-holes is preferably the same as that between any two circumferentially adjacent through-holes. In the area of the hypothetical partition, it is often difficult to arrange through-holes with uniform open areas at uniform intervals. Therefore, it may not be possible to form through-holes in this area. If they are formed, the diameters and intervals thereof may be somewhat different from the diameters and intervals of through-holes in other areas. In this text of the specification, however, the diameters and intervals of the through-holes in the vicinity of the hypothetical partition are considered to be the same as the diameters and intervals of the through-holes in other area, even if, in fact, they are somewhat different.

In one example, through-holes may be oriented parallel to the line connecting the center of each hypothetical segment with the center of the resin core member, or oriented toward the center of the resin core member.

The resin core member has at least one exposed surface portion for contacting the mouth mold for a preform. When a preform is molded, this exposed surface portion contacts the mouth mold, thus retaining the resin core member in a specified place.

A flange is formed at the lower circumference of the resin core member as a part of the support ring, thereby providing thermal resistance to the support ring. Due to this thermal resistance, a bottle can be held stably by the support ring while

hot liquid is poured into the bottle or while the bottle cap is tightened.

If the top or bottom face of the flange is in contact with the mouth mold, the resin core member is held more stably in the mold.

If a radial outward projection is formed immediately above the flange, and an outer surface between the peripheral end surface of the projection and the peripheral end surface of the flange is exposed, so as to be in contact with the mouth mold when a bottle preform is molded, the mold can hold the resin core member more stably.

Normally, most of the cylindrical body of the resin core member is embedded in the bottle resin material to form a three-layered bottle mouth. Alternatively, the outer surface of the cylindrical body may be exposed with only threads formed of bottle resin material on the outer surface. In such a case, the bottle resin material flows through the through holes from inside to outside the cylindrical body to form the threads. In this text of the specification, even if the outer cylindrical body surface, except for the surface portion for threads, is exposed, the resin core member is considered to be embedded in the bottle mouth.

The top end surface of the cylindrical body of the resin core member may be exposed to permit contact with the mouth mold. In such a case, however, the boundary lines between the bottle resin layer and the resin core member may be visible, even if not clearly. To hide these lines, the entire top surface of the cylindrical body may be covered with bottle resin material, or the top end portion of the cylindrical body may be extended horizontally in both outward and inward directions so as to constitute the entire top end surface of the bottle mouth.

Alternatively, spiral, vertical or horizontal ridges may be formed on the resin core member to serve as the contact surface with the mouth mold.

Any resin material may be used for the bottle, although PET resin is preferred.

To provide thermal resistance to the bottle mouth, the resin core member is preferably made of thermally resistant resin. Specifically, when PET resin is used for the bottle, the resin core member is preferably made of "U-Polymer" (U-8400 made by Unitika Ltd.) obtained by dehydrogenation polymerization of phthalic acid, ethylene glycol and bisphenol A, polyarylate resin, polyamide resin (including amorphous type), polycarbonate resin, polyimide resin, polysulfone resin, polyethylenenaphthalate resin or the like resin whose thermal resistance is higher than that of PET resin.

"U-Polymer" has a particularly high adhesion property. Therefore, if the resin core member is made of "U-Polymer", the resin core member is

bonded firmly with the bottle resin even when the bottle mouth has a two-layered structure with the top or bottom face of the flange exposed, or when the outer cylindrical body surface is exposed with threads formed of bottle resin material around the exposed cylindrical body surface.

Together with, or instead of, the thermally resistant resin, a reversible or irreversible pigment (for instance, a pigment whose color varies with temperature) and/or a bacteriostat may be added to the resin of the resin core member. The resin of the resin core member may be colored, carved and/or provided with surface-printing..

The bottle drum body and bottom may have various structures according to the purpose. For instance, if the bottle is to be used for retorted food, the bottle drum body may be heat-set or multiple-layered with a thermally resistant resin layer to provide thermal resistance. If the bottle is to be used for a carbonated drink, the bottle drum body may be multiple-layered with a gas barrier resin layer which blocks the transmission of carbon dioxide gas, and the like. To provide thermal resistance and pressure resistance, the bottle drum body may be heat set and the bottom may be multiple-layered with a gas barrier resin or thermally resistant resin layer.

A synthetic resin bottle having the bottle mouth structure of the present invention is manufactured using the following method.

First, a preliminarily molded synthetic resin core member is set in the mouth mold for a preform. The resin core member comprises a cylindrical body having a plurality of through-holes in the circumferential wall thereof and constituting the wall of a bottle mouth, a flange constituting a support ring of the bottle mouth, and at least one surface portion to-be contacting the mouth mold to retain the resin core member stably within the mold when the mold is clamped. The mouth mold is clamped to hold the resin core member set therein, and a cavity mold is installed. Bottle resin material is introduced into a cavity between the drum body mold and a core mold by injection to mold a preform drum body. Alternatively, a certain quantity of bottle resin may be extruded into a cavity and compressed by a core mold to mold a preform drum body. The bottle resin material is allowed to flow from inside to outside the cylindrical body through the through holes to form a bottle mouth. A synthetic resin bottle preform is thus completed.

The preform thus manufactured is blown to be biaxially -stretched so as to form a synthetic resin bottle.

The bottle mouth structure according to the present invention comprises a preliminarily molded synthetic resin core member embedded in the bottle resin material, the resin core member including

a cylindrical body which constitutes the wall of the bottle mouth and a flange which constitutes the support ring of the bottle mouth. Therefore, the bottle mouth of the present invention is provided with various properties simply by selecting appropriate resin material for the resin core member. For instance, the bottle mouth will provide thermal resistance if thermally resistant resin is selected as the resin core member material.

Since the resin core member is molded before it is set in the mouth mold and embedded in the bottle mouth, thermal treatment is not necessary. Also, it is easy to set the resin core member in a proper position in the bottle mouth. In addition, since a bottle preform with the resin core member embedded in the bottle mouth is blown to be biaxially stretched to form a bottle, a high adhesion force is obtained between the cylindrical body of the resin core member and the bottle resin.

If the cylindrical body is a plate type, with a plurality of through-holes formed in the circumferential wall thereof, bottle resin material is allowed to flow through the holes from inside to outside the resin core member, with the bottle resin material filling the through- holes serving as a bridge connecting the inner and outer layers across the resin core member. Consequently, the bonding strength between the bottle resin material and the resin core member is reinforced.

If the downward-facing inside edge (or edges) of the cylindrical body is rounded to have a radius of 0.5mm or more, or chamfered to be tapered upward so that the inside radius of the cylindrical body measured at the start of the taper is 0.5mm or more larger than that measured at the end of the taper, bottle resin material flows smoothly.

According to the present invention, through-holes of 1mm or larger diameter are formed in the wall of the cylindrical body, allowing bottle resin material to flow through. The thickness of the cylindrical body wall is set to permit a 0.5mm or wider gap or passage for bottle resin material between the inner surface of the cylindrical body and the core mold. The through-holes are formed in the resin core member such that, when the resin core member is divided by a hypothetical partition into equal hypothetical segments, the total open area of the through-holes in one hypothetical segment is the same as that in the other segment. This distributes bottle resin material as a uniform rate from inside to outside the cylindrical body, thus preventing the resin core member from being distorted, bent or deformed.

According to the present invention, if the bottle drum body and/or the bottom are heat-set or multiple-layered with a thermal resistant or gas barrier resin layer, it is possible to realize a high thermal resistant and/or high pressure resistant bot-

ble suitable as a container for retorted food, soda water and carbonated natural juice.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Figs. 1A through 1E shows a bottle mouth structure according to a first embodiment of the present invention:

Fig. 1A is a sectional view of a bottle.

Fig. 1B is a perspective view of a resin core member.

Fig. 1C is a longitudinal sectional view of the resin core member

Fig. 1D is a sectional view of the resin core member along the ID-ID line in Fig. 1C.

Fig. 1E is a developed view of the cylindrical body of the resin core member.

Fig. 2 is a drawing to which reference will be made in explaining the manufacturing method of a bottle preform having the bottle mouth structure of the invention.

Figs. 3A through 3E shows a bottle mouth structure according to a second embodiment of the invention:

Fig. 3A is a sectional view of a bottle.

Fig. 3B is a perspective view of a resin core member.

Fig. 3C is a longitudinal sectional view of the resin core member of Fig. 3B.

Fig. 3D is a sectional view of the resin core member taken along the line IIID-IIID in Fig. 3C.

Fig. 3E is a developed view of the cylinder body of the resin core member.

Figs. 4A through 4C show the resin core member of a bottle mouth structure according to a third embodiment of the invention:

Fig. 4A is a longitudinal sectional view of the resin core member.

Fig. 4B is a sectional view of the resin core member along IVB-IVB in Fig. 4A.

Fig. 4C is a developed view of cylindrical body of the resin core member.

Figs. 5A through 5C shows the resin core member of a bottle mouth structure according to a fourth embodiment of the invention:

Fig. 5A is a horizontal sectional view of the resin core member.

Fig. 5B is a horizontal sectional view of the resin core member along VB-VB in Fig. 5A.

Fig. 5C is a developed view of the cylindrical body of the resin core member.

Figs. 6A through 6C shows the resin core member of a bottle mouth structure according to fifth embodiment of the invention:

Fig. 6A is a longitudinal sectional view of the resin core member.

Fig. 6B is a sectional view of the core along

VIB-VIB in Fig. 6A.

Fig. 6C is a developed view of the cylindrical body of the resin core member.

Figs. 7 through 9 are sectional views bottle mouth structures according to the sixth through eighth embodiments, respectively, of the invention.

Fig. 10 is a sectional view of a bottle having a bottle mouth structure according to a ninth embodiment of the invention.

Figs. 11A and 11B show a bottle mouth structure according to a tenth embodiment of the invention:

Fig. 11A is a sectional view of the bottle.

Fig. 11B is a perspective view of the resin core member.

Figs. 12A and 12B show a bottle mouth structure according to a eleventh embodiment of the invention:

Fig. 12A is a sectional view of the bottle mouth structure.

Fig. 12B is a perspective view of the resin core member.

Figs. 13A through 13C show a bottle mouth structure according to a twelfth embodiment of the invention:

Fig. 13A is a sectional view of the bottle mouth structure.

Fig. 13B is a perspective view of the resin core member.

Fig. 13C is a horizontal sectional view of the resin core member along XIIIC-XIIIC in Fig. 13B.

Figs. 14A and 14B show a bottle mouth structure according to a thirteenth embodiment of the invention:

Fig. 14A is a sectional view of the bottle mouth structure.

Fig. 14B is a perspective view of the resin core member of the bottle mouth structure of Fig. 14A.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

The present invention will be described further in detail with reference to the first through thirteenth embodiments and the attached drawings Figs. 1 through 14.

Referring to Figs. 1A through 1E, a bottle mouth or neck structure 1 of a first embodiment of the present invention includes a resin core member 2 having a cylindrical body 3 and a flange 7 sandwiched between bottle resin material layers in such a manner that a majority portion of the cylindrical body 3 is embedded in the bottle resin.

Through-holes 15 are formed in the cylindrical wall of the cylindrical body 3, permitting bottle

resin material to pass through. The resin material passing through the holes 15, sandwiches the resin core member 2 on both sides and fills up the through-holes 15 to form bridges connecting the inner and outer bottle resin layers, thereby fixing the resin core member 2 firmly and stably in the bottle neck structure 1.

The through-holes 15 in the resin core member 2 are arranged and oriented so that bottle resin material may flow as uniformly as possible from inside to outside the cylindrical body 3. The diameter of each through-hole 15 is at least 1mm to permit smooth flow of the bottle resin material therethrough during molding with the bottle resin.

Referring to Figs. 1D and 1C, the cylindrical body 3 is divided by a hypothetical partition 21 into two equal hypothetical half segments 22, 22. The through-holes 15, 15, ... are formed in stagger in each of the hypothetical half segments 22, 22,

Referring to Fig. 1C, except for through-holes 15a, 15a at the hypothetical partition 21, the through-holes 15, 15, ... in each half segment 22 are spaced apart substantially evenly in both vertical and circumferential directions. That is, the vertical distance "a" between any adjacent holes is virtually the same as the circumferential distance "b" between any adjacent holes. Further, all holes 15 are substantially the same diameter (for example, with a variation within 10 per cent). The arrangement of the holes 15a, 15, 15, ... in the half segments 22, 22 are symmetrical with respect to the hypothetical partition 21.

Moreover, as shown in the drawings, the distance between the hole 15a at the partition and any adjacent hole 15 is almost equal to the distance between adjacent holes 15 in a half segment 22, and each hole 15a has almost the same open area as a hole 15. For present purposes, such minor differences in distance and in open area are ignored, and it is considered that any adjacent pair holes 15, 15a are spaced apart virtually equally from each other and that the open area of every hole 15 or 15a is considered to be substantially the same.

Thus, according to the first embodiment of the present invention, the arrangement and the total open areas of the through-holes 15a, 15, 15, ... in one half segment 22 of the resin core member 2 are virtually the same as those in the other half segment 22. Therefore, resin for the bottle is allowed to flow at a substantially uniform rate from inside to outside the cylindrical body 3 of the resin core member 2.

The axes of all through-holes 15a, 15, 15, ... in each half segment 22 are oriented parallel to a line connecting the arc center of the segment with the center of the resin core member 2. In other words, the holes are oriented perpendicularly to the hy-

pothetical partition 21 which corresponds to the parting line of a split mold (or in the open/close direction of the split mold), facilitating injection molding of the resin core member 2.

According to the first embodiment, in addition to a flange 7 formed at the lower end of the cylindrical body 3 of the resin core member 2, a radial outward projection 6A is formed immediately above the flange 7. A second radial outward projection 6B encircles the upper end of the cylindrical body 3 so that the resin core member 2 is held stably in the mold when a preform is molded.

Outer surface portions of the resin core member 3 between a peripheral end surface 4A of the projection 6A and a peripheral end surface 5A of the flange 7 and between a peripheral end surface 4B of the projection 6B and the top rim 4D of the cylindrical body 3 are exposed so as to be in contact with the mouth mold when a preform is molded. The flange 7 constitutes a part of a support ring 8.

To save resin material used for forming the resin core member 2, steps are formed in the inner wall of the cylindrical body 3 of the resin core member 2 to provide downward-facing edges 30 and 31.

For smooth flow of bottle resin material, the downward-facing inside edges 30 and 31 of the cylindrical body 3 of the resin core member 2 are rounded to have a radius of 0.5mm or more or cut off to be tapered so that the inside radius of the cylindrical body measured at the taper starting edge is 0.5mm or more larger than that measured at the taper end edge.

The resin thickness of inside layer 18 of the cylindrical body 3 of the resin core member 2 is set at 0.5mm or larger for smooth flow of the resin.

As shown in Fig. 2, the resin core member 2 is fit in a neck mold 32 in preparation for molding a preform 11. Portions of the projections 6A and 6B and of the flange 7 that will be exposed after the neck is formed are placed in contact with the surfaces of the neck mold 32. Then a core mold 33 and a cavity mold 34 are clamped in place. Bottle resin material is injected through a gate 35 into a cavity to form a bottle drum body first. The bottle resin material flows through the through-holes 15 and 15a from inside to outside the cylindrical body 3 of the resin core member 2, thereby forming a bottle neck,

In the preferred embodiment, PET resin is used as bottle resin material, and a thermally resistant resin such as "U Polymer" with higher thermal resistance than PET resin is used for the resin core member 2.

Reversible or irreversible pigment and/or bacteriostat may be added in the resin material for the resin core member 2.

The resin core member 2 may be colored, carved or provided with surface-printing.

The preform 11 thus manufactured is blown into a biaxially stretched bottle 13. The bottle drum body 14 is normally heat set.

Figs. 3A through 3E show a bottle neck structure 1 of a second embodiment of the present invention. The second embodiment is completely the same as the first embodiment, excepting that the inside surface of the cylindrical body 3 is not stepped so that it has no upper downward-facing edge 31.

Figs. 4A through 4C show the resin core member 2 of the bottle neck according to a third embodiment of the present invention. The resin core member 2 of this embodiment has the same configuration as that of the first embodiment except for the arrangement and orientation of the through-holes 15. The resin core member 2 of this embodiment has no edge 31.

According to the third embodiment, the resin core member 2 is formed in a quarter-split mold. The hypothetical partitions 21, 21 correspond to the parting lines of the split mold. Through-holes 15, 15, ... are formed in the orientation along the open/close direction of each hypothetical quarter segment of the mold, that is, in parallel with the line connecting the arc centre of each quarter segment 22 with the center of the resin core member 2.

In each hypothetical quarter segment 22, the through-holes 15, 15, ... are arranged in a matrix, spaced apart substantially uniformly from the vertical and circumferential adjacent holes. As shown, no through-holes 15 are formed at the hypothetical partitions 21, 21. However, the distance between adjacent through holes 15, across each partition 21, in adjacent segments 22 is almost equal to the distance between adjacent holes 15 in a segment 22. Here, such minor difference in the distance is ignored, and it is considered that any adjacent holes 15, 15a are spaced apart equally from each other.

Figs. 5A through 5C shows a resin core member 2 of a bottle neck according to a fourth embodiment of the invention. The resin core member 2 of this embodiment has also the same configuration as the resin core member 2 of the first embodiment except for the arrangement and orientation of through-holes. The resin core member 2 of this embodiment has also no edge 31.

The resin core member 2 of this embodiment is formed in a split mold. Excepting the through-holes 15a at the hypothetical partition 21, the through-holes 15, 15, ... are formed in stagger in each of the hypothetical half segments, and are spaced apart almost equally in both vertical and circumferential directions. Each through-hole 15

has substantially the same diameter. Further, excepting the holes 15a at the hypothetical partition 21, the holes 15, 15, ... are oriented to the center of the resin core member 2.

Like those of the first embodiment, the through-holes 15a at the hypothetical partition are formed perpendicularly to hypothetical partition 21, making it easy to open the split mold after the resin core member 2 has been molded. The distance between a through-holes 15a at the hypothetical partition 21 and an adjacent through-hole 15 is different from that between any adjacent holes 15 in a half segment 21. The open area of each hole 15a is a little different from that of each hole 15. However, such minor difference in the distance and in the open area is ignored, and it is considered that any adjacent holes 15, 15a are spaced apart virtually equally from each other and the open area of each hole 15 or 15a is considered to be virtually the same. The through-holes 15a at the hypothetical partition 21 is not necessarily formed.

Figs. 6A through 6C show a resin core member 2 of a bottle neck according to a fifth embodiment of the invention. The resin core member 2 of this embodiment has also the same configuration as the resin core member 2 of the first embodiment except for the arrangement and orientation of through-holes. The resin core member 2 of this embodiment has also no edge 31.

In this embodiment, the through-holes 15, 15, ... are spaced apart virtually equally over the entire circumference of the cylindrical body 3, and have substantially the same diameter. Every hole 15 is oriented to the center of the resin core member 2.

The resin core member 2 of the fifth embodiment is ideal in that it permits resin for bottle to flow from inside to outside the resin core member 2 at a uniform rate. With this configuration of the resin core member 2, however, it is impossible to open the split mold after the resin core member 2 has been formed, if the split mold is of an ordinary type. Through-holes must be drilled after a resin core member 2 has been formed. Otherwise, it is necessary to use such a complicated split mold or core mold that has through-hole forming pins which are slidably retracted within the split mold before the formed resin core member 2 is taken out of the mold.

Fig. 7 shows a bottle neck structure 1 of a sixth embodiment of the invention. In the resin core member 2 forming this bottle neck structure 1, the outer surface of the cylindrical body 3 from the top rim 4D to the peripheral end surface 5A of the flange 7, excepting the threads 21, serves as a contact surface with the neck mold, that is, to be exposed even after the bottle neck has been formed. Therefore, the threads 21 are the only

bottle resin material on the outer surface of the resin core member 2. The threads 21 are formed of bottle resin material allowed to flow through the through-holes 15 from inside to the outside the cylindrical body 3.

The other features of the resin core member 2 of this embodiment is the same as that of the first embodiment excepting that a downward-facing edge 31 is not formed on the inner surface of the cylindrical body 3, and that the cylindrical body 3 has no radial outward projection 6B at the upper end thereof.

Figs. 8 and 9 show a bottle neck structure 1 of seventh and eighth embodiments, respectively, of the present invention. According to the seventh embodiment, in addition to a radial outward projection 6b, an inward projection 16 is formed at the upper end of the cylindrical body 3. Therefore, only the resin material of the resin core member 2 is exposed on the bottle neck top surface. In contrast, according to the eighth embodiment, the top rim 4D of the cylindrical body 3 of the resin core member 2 is completely covered with bottle resin material. Therefore, the bottle resin material alone is exposed on the bottle mouth top surface.

Fig. 10 shows a bottle having the neck structure 1 of a ninth embodiment of the present invention. Unlike that of the first embodiment, the resin core member 2 of this neck structure has no radial outward projection 6B, 6A at the upper end of the cylindrical body. The flange 7 at the lower end of the resin core member 2 constitutes the base of a support ring 8. Therefore, when the bottle neck 1 of this embodiment is molded, the top rim 4D of the cylindrical body 3, and the peripheral ends surface 5A and lower surface 5B of the flange 7 are made in contact with the neck mold, that is, exposed to the exterior even after the bottle neck has been formed. The bottom of the bottle is multiple-layered with a thermally resistant resin layer 12. The bottle drum body is heat-set.

Figs. 11A and 11B show a bottle neck structure 1 of a tenth embodiment of the present invention. According to this embodiment, a radial inward projection 16 is formed at the upper end of the cylindrical body 3 of the resin core member 2. The surface from the top rim 4D of the cylindrical body 3 to the inner peripheral end surface 4E and the surface of the flange 7 at the lower end of the cylindrical body 3 are in contact with a neck mold and a core mold. According to this embodiment, in addition to the through-holes 15 in the cylindrical body 3, notches 9 and grooves 10 are formed in the flange 7 as passage of bottle resin material. Therefore, the surface portion of the flange 7 to be in contact with a mouth mold is the peripheral end surface 5A excepting the notches 9 and a substantial portion of the upper surface 5C excepting the

grooves 10.

The drum body and bottom of the bottle of this embodiment are multiple-layered with thermally resistant and/or gas barrier resin layer 12.

Figs. 12A and 12B show a bottle neck structure 1 of a eleventh embodiment of the present invention. According to this embodiment, the cylindrical body 3 of the resin core member 2 is of a mesh with a ring 19 on the upper end and with a flange 7 on the lower end. The peripheral end surface 5A of the flange 7 and the top end surface 4D of the ring 19 are made in contact with a mouth mold, that is, exposed to the exterior when the neck has been formed.

Figs. 13A, 13B and 13C show a bottle neck structure 1 of a twelfth embodiment of the invention. The cylindrical body 3 of the resin core member 2 comprises a plurality of columns 20 (column train) arranged to form a cylinder. A ring 19 and a flange are provided on the upper and lower ends, respectively, of the columns 20. The top end surface 4D of the ring 19 and the peripheral end surface 5A and lower surface 5B of the flange 7 are made in contact with a neck mold, or exposed to the exterior when the bottle neck has been molded.

Figs. 14A and 14B show a bottle neck structure 1 of a thirteenth embodiment of the invention. A spiral projection 17 is formed on the outer circumferential surface of the cylindrical body 3 of the resin core member 2. The ridge of the spiral projection 17 and the outer end surface 5A of the flange 7 are exposed to the exterior when the bottle neck has been molded.

Claims

1. A bottle neck structure of a synthetic resin bottle with a preformed synthetic resin core member embedded in the bottle neck; wherein said resin core member comprises a cylindrical body constituting the wall of the bottle neck, a flange constituting the support ring of the bottle neck, at least one exposed surface portion to be in contact with a preform mold when a bottle preform is molded, and a plurality of through-holes formed in the circumferential wall of said cylindrical body.

2. A bottle neck structure according to claim 1, wherein said cylindrical body is of plate, said through-holes in the circumferential wall of the cylindrical body being 1mm or larger in diameter, the synthetic resin layer for bottle inside the resin core member being 0.5mm or more in thickness, the downward-facing inside edge or edges of the resin core member being rounded to have a radius of 0.5mm or more or tapered upward so that the inside radius of the cylindrical body measured at the taper starting edge is 0.5mm or more larger

than that measured at the taper end edge.

3. A bottle neck structure according to claim 1 or 2, wherein supposing said cylindrical body of the resin core member is divided by a hypothetical partition into equal hypothetical segments, the total open area of the through-holes in one hypothetical segment is equal to that in the other hypothetical segment.

4. A bottle neck structure according to any one of claims 1 through 3, wherein the locations of through-holes in each of said hypothetical segments are symmetrical with respect to the through-holes in all other hypothetical segments.

5. A bottle neck structure according to any one of claims 1 through 4, wherein the through-holes are spaced apart substantially uniformly in both vertical and circumferential directions, each through-hole having substantially the same open area.

6. A bottle neck structure according to any one of claims 1 through 6, wherein said cylindrical body is dividable into two or more hypothetical equal segments and wherein each of said through-holes in each segment is oriented parallel to the line connecting the center of the segment to the center of the resin core member.

7. A bottle neck structure according to any one of claims 1 through 5, wherein said cylindrical body is dividable into two or more hypothetical equal segments and wherein each of said through-holes in each segment is oriented to the center of the resin core member.

8. A bottle neck structure according to any one of claims 1 through 7, wherein an outward projection is formed around the outer surface of the cylindrical body, immediately above said flange of the resin core member, the outer surface of the resin core member between the periphery of the outward projection and the periphery of the flange providing an exposed surface to be in contact with a preform mouth mold when a preform is molded.

9. A bottle neck structure according to any one of claims 1 through 8, wherein said exposed surface to be in contact with the preform neck mold includes one of spiral, vertical and horizontal ridges.

10. A bottle neck structure according to any one of claims 1 through 9, wherein said resin core member is made of thermally -resistant resin.

11. A bottle neck structure according to any one of claims 1 through 10, in which the resin material of the resin core member contains reversible or irreversible pigment and or bacteriostat.

12. A bottle neck structure according to any one of claims 1 through 11, wherein said resin core member is colored, carved and/or provided with surface-printing.

13. A bottle having a neck structure according to any one of claims 1 through 12, wherein the bottle drum body is heat set.

14. A bottle having the neck structure according to any one of claims 1 through 12, wherein the bottle drum is multiple-layered.

15. A bottle neck structure according to any one of claims 1 or 8 through 14, wherein said cylindrical body of the resin core member is of column train, mesh or lattice.

16. A method of manufacturing a synthetic resin bottle preform, comprising steps of : clamping a preform neck mold to hold a preliminarily molded synthetic resin core member therein, said synthetic resin core member comprising a cylindrical body having a plurality of through-holes in the circumferential wall thereof and constituting the circumferential wall of a bottle neck, a flange constituting the support ring of the bottle neck, and at least one surface portion to be in contact with the preform neck mold when clamped so as to retain the resin core member stably within the preform neck mold; clamping a cavity mold and a core mold; introducing bottle resin material into a cavity to injection-mold a cavity; and then allowing the bottle resin material to flow from inside to outside said cylindrical body through said plurality of through-holes thereby forming a bottle neck.

17. A method of manufacturing a synthetic resin bottle preform, comprising steps of: clamping a preform neck mold to hold a preliminarily molded synthetic resin core member therein, said synthetic resin core member comprising a cylindrical body having a plurality of through-holes in the circumferential wall thereof and constituting the circumferential wall of a bottle neck, a flange constituting the support ring of the bottle neck, and at least one surface portion to be in contact with the preform neck mold when clamped so as to retain the resin core member stably within the preform neck mold; clamping a cavity mold; extruding a certain quantity of bottle resin material into a cavity to compression mold a cavity with a core mold; and then allowing the bottle resin material to flow from inside to outside said cylindrical body through said plurality of through-holes thereby forming a bottle neck.

18. A synthetic resin bottle obtained by blow-stretching the preform manufactured by the method according to claim 16 or 17.

Fig 1A

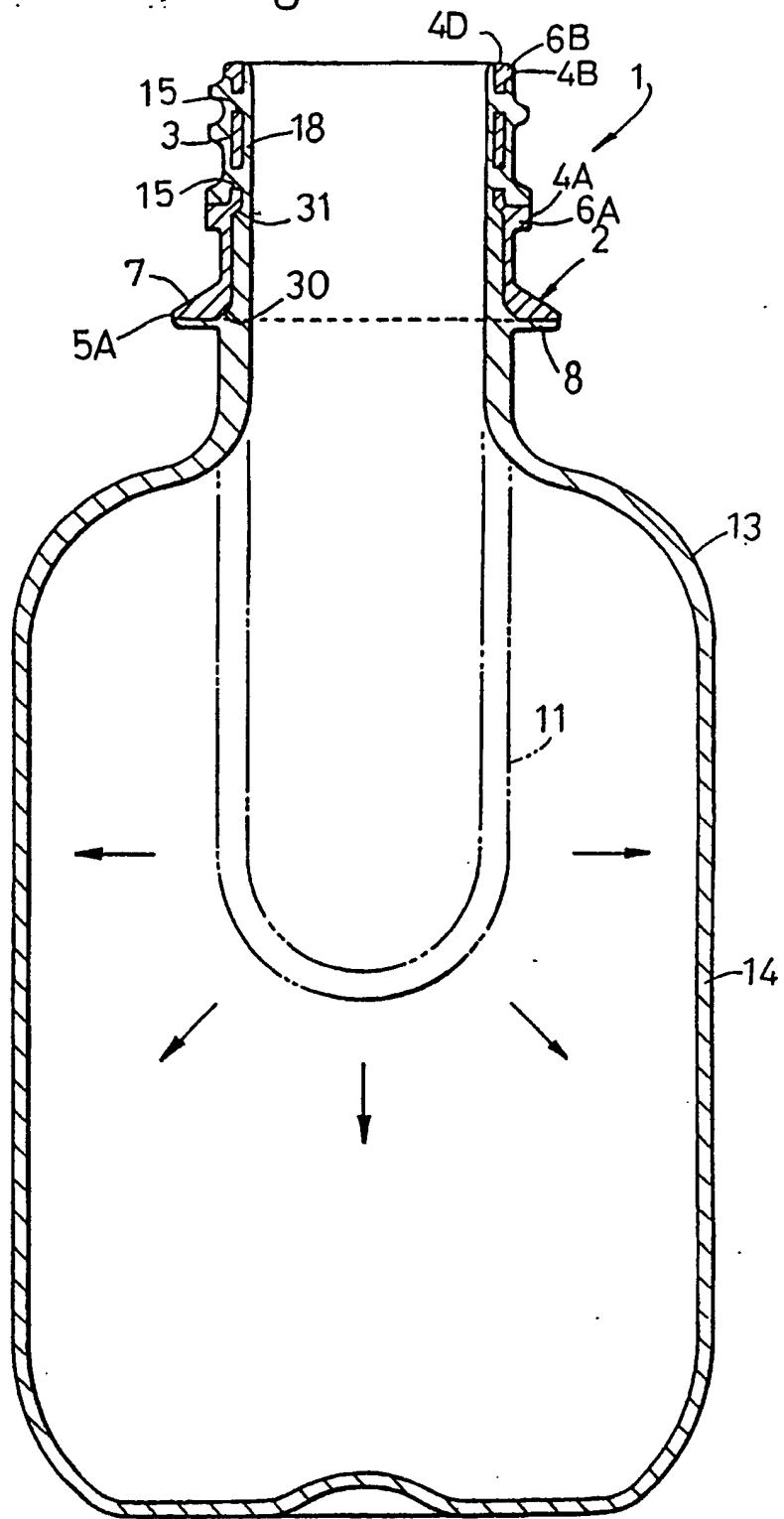


Fig 1B

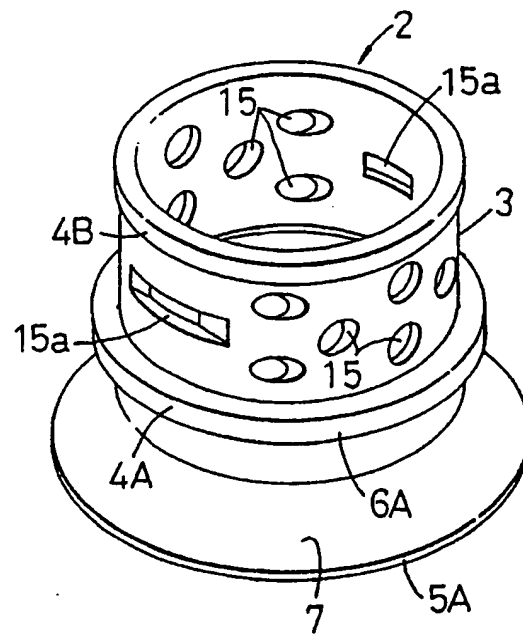


Fig 1C

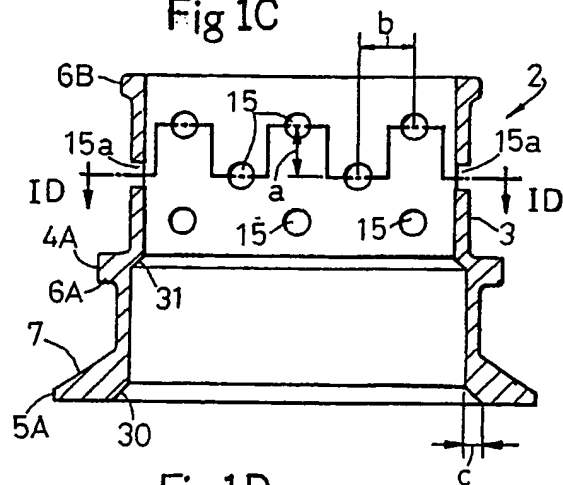


Fig 1D

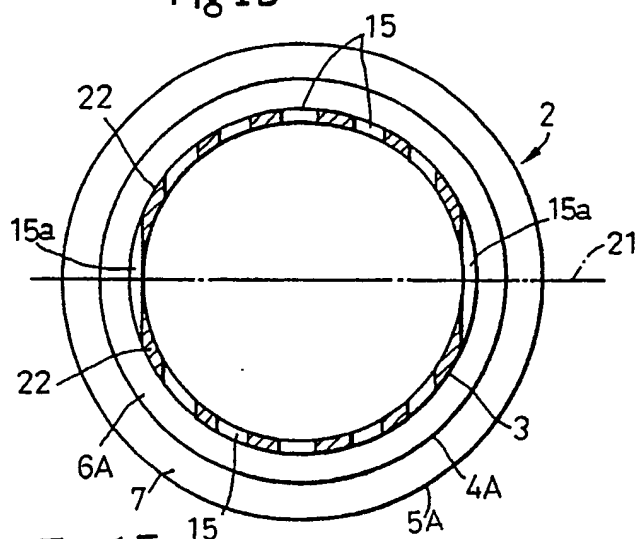


Fig 1E

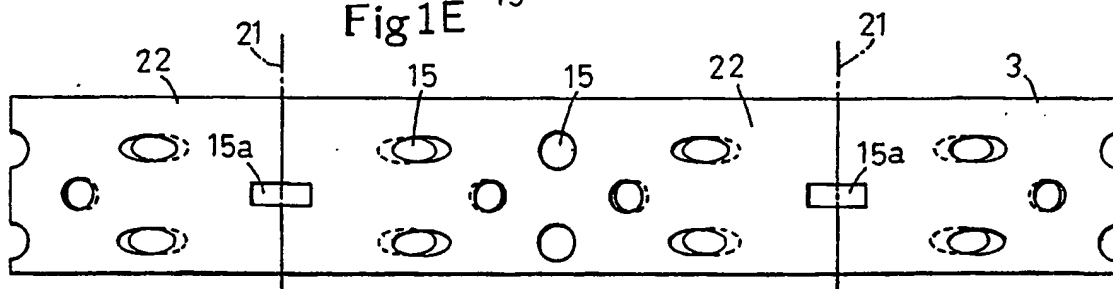


Fig 3A

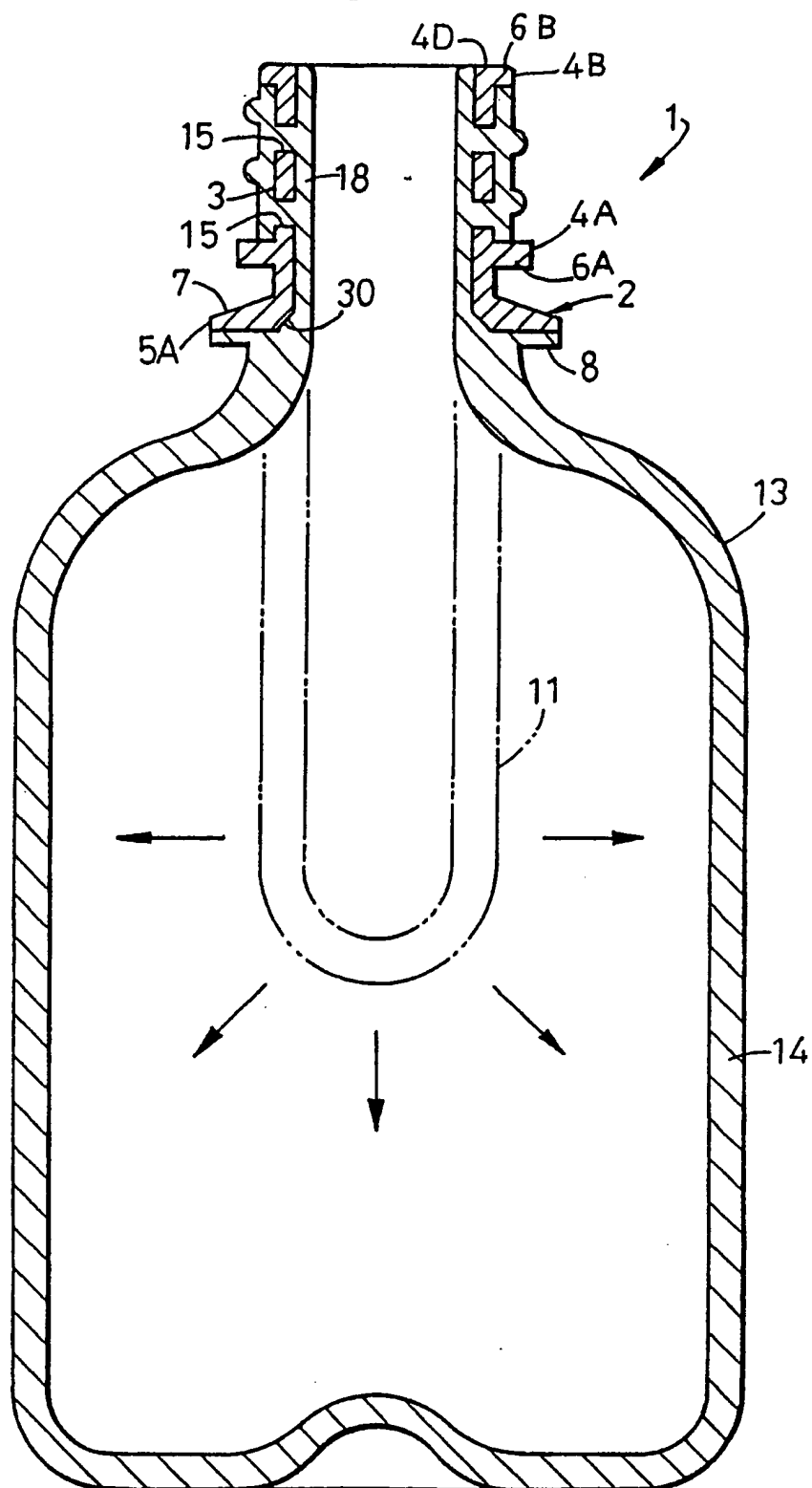


Fig 3B

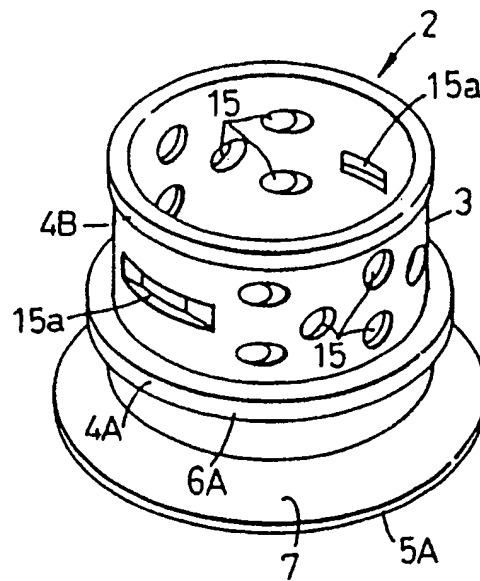


Fig 3C

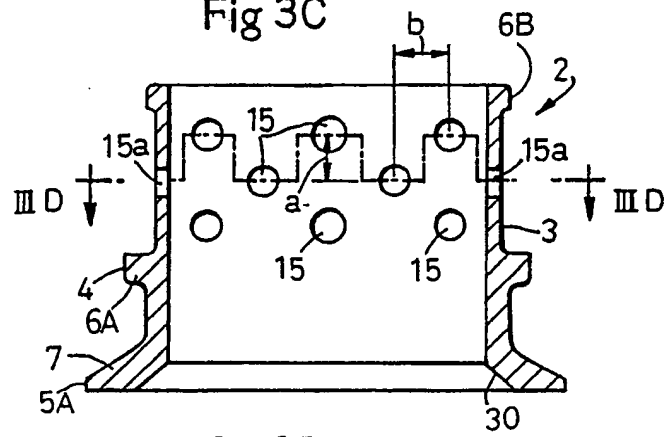


Fig 3D

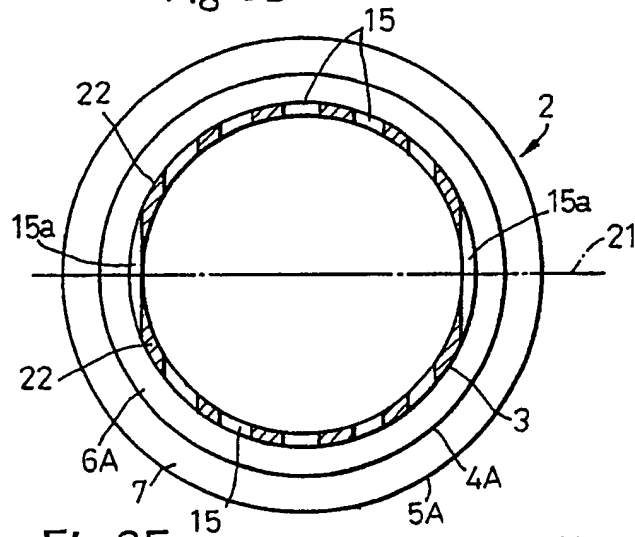


Fig 3E

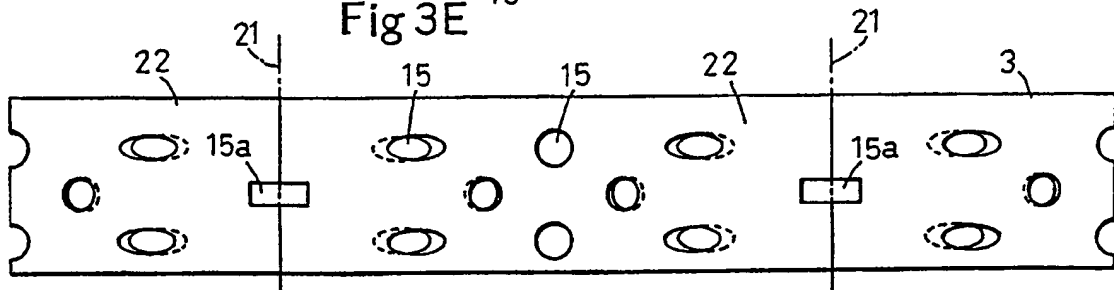


Fig 4A

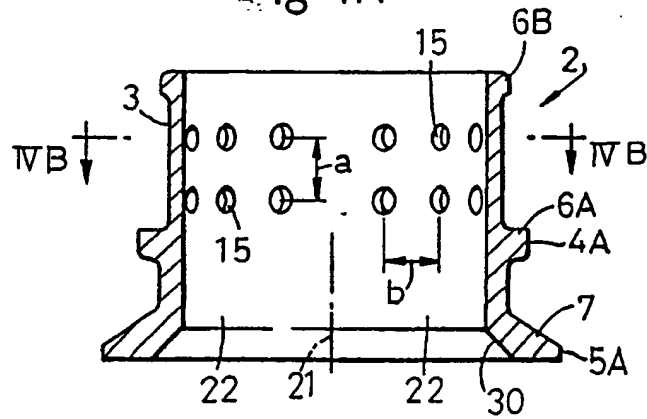


Fig 4B

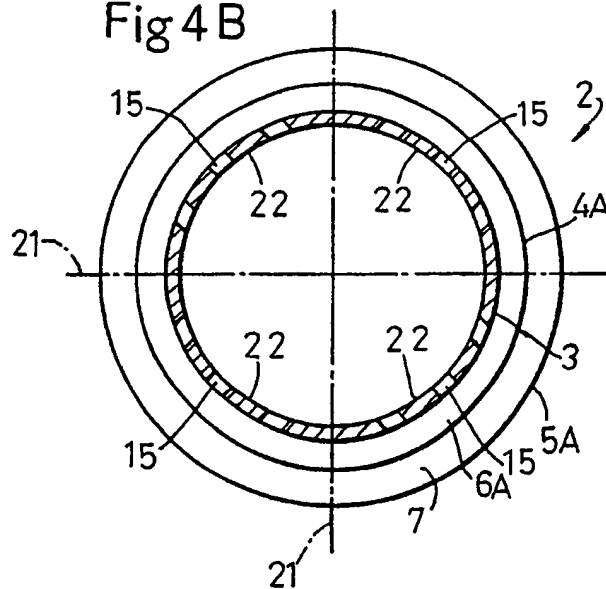


Fig 4C

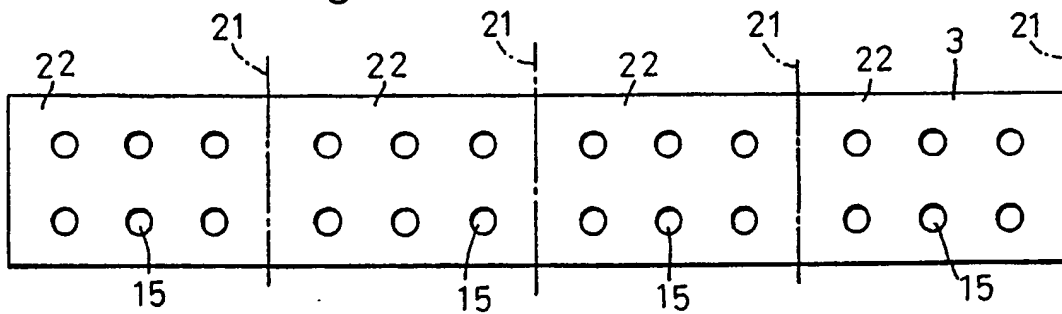


Fig 5A

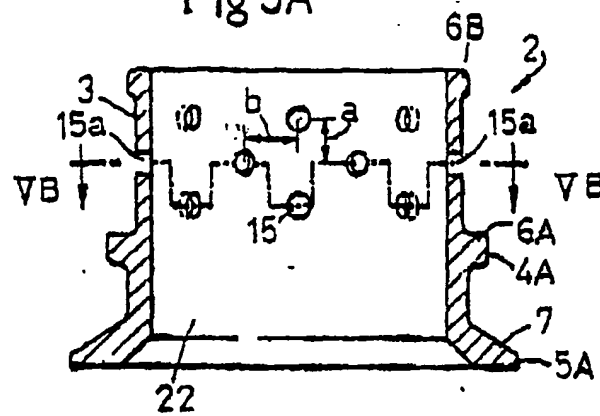


Fig 5B

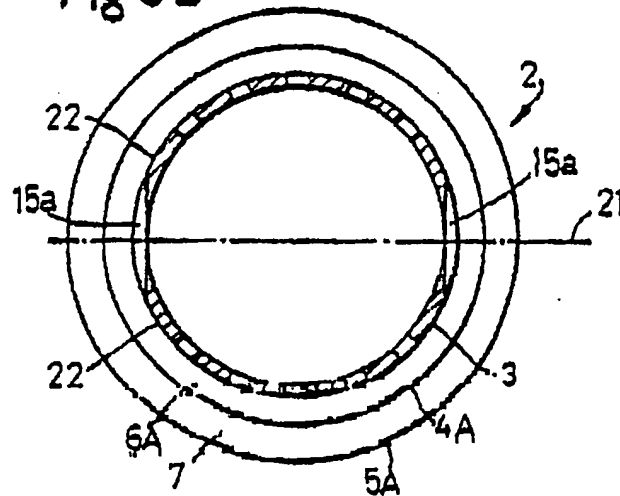


Fig 5C

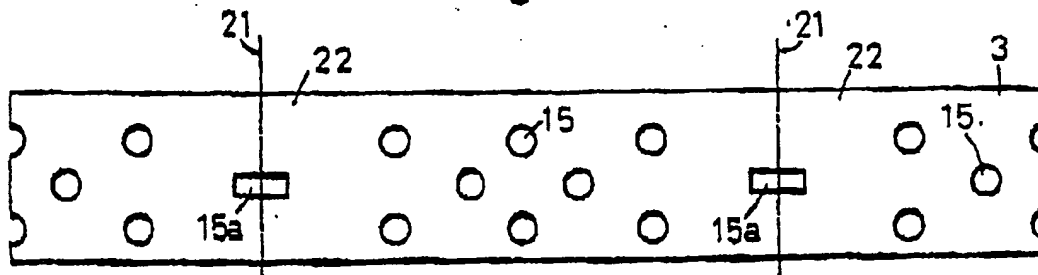


Fig 6A

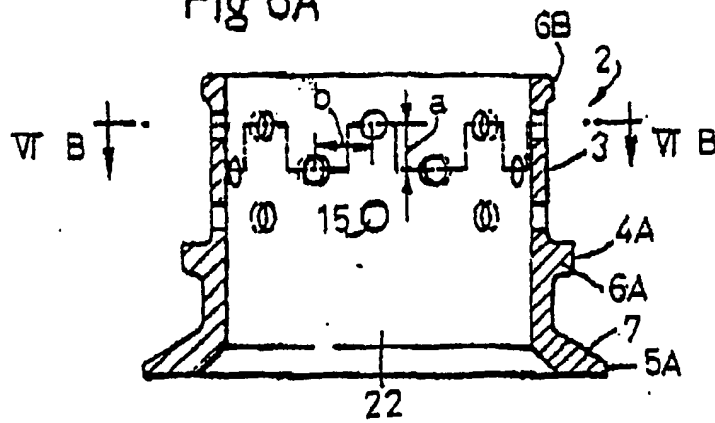


Fig 6B

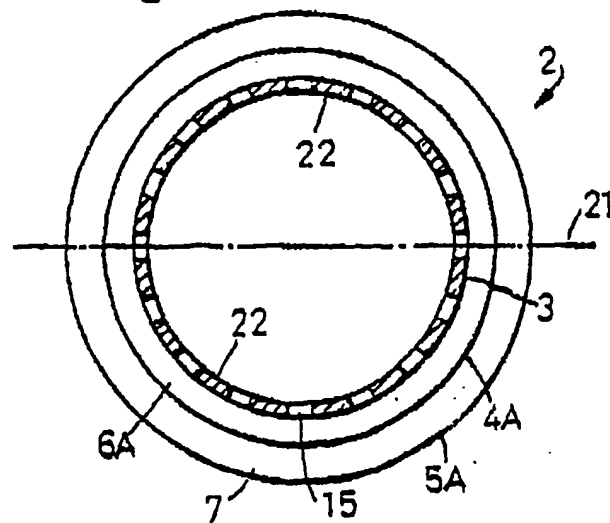


Fig 6C

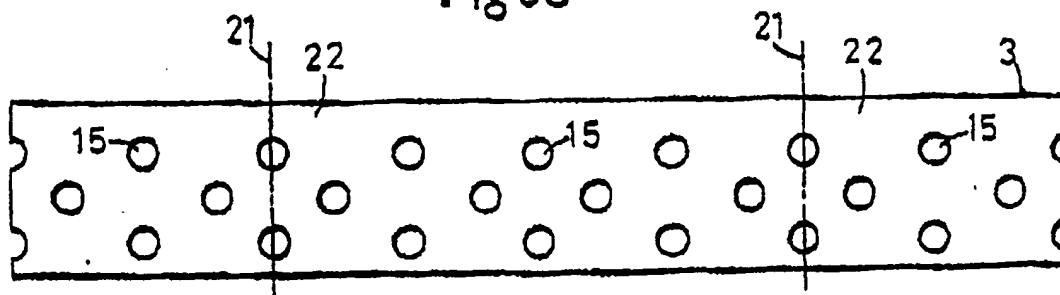


Fig 7

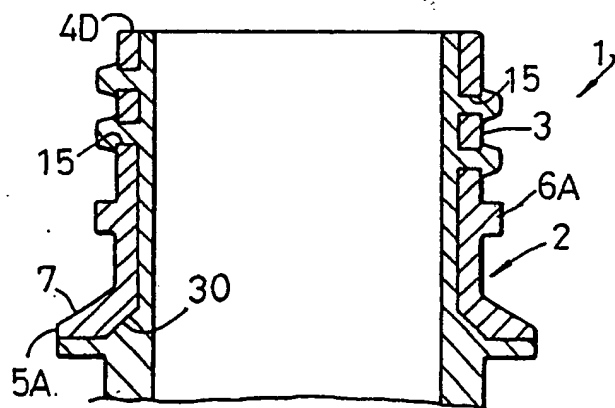


Fig 8

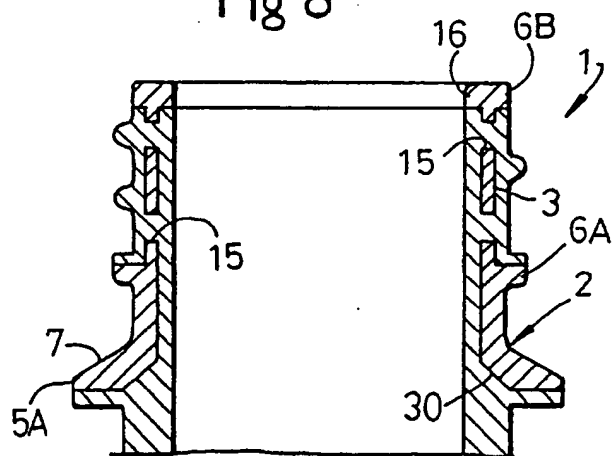


Fig 9

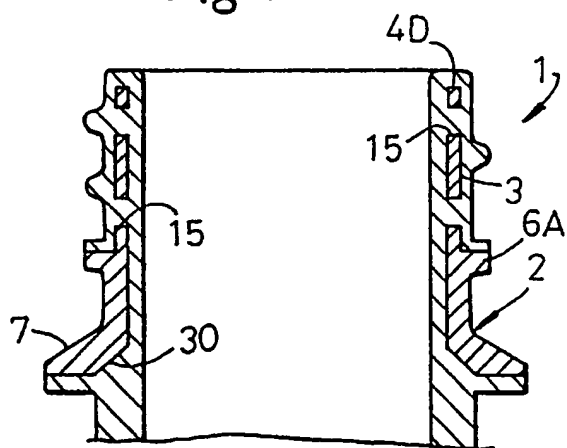


Fig 10

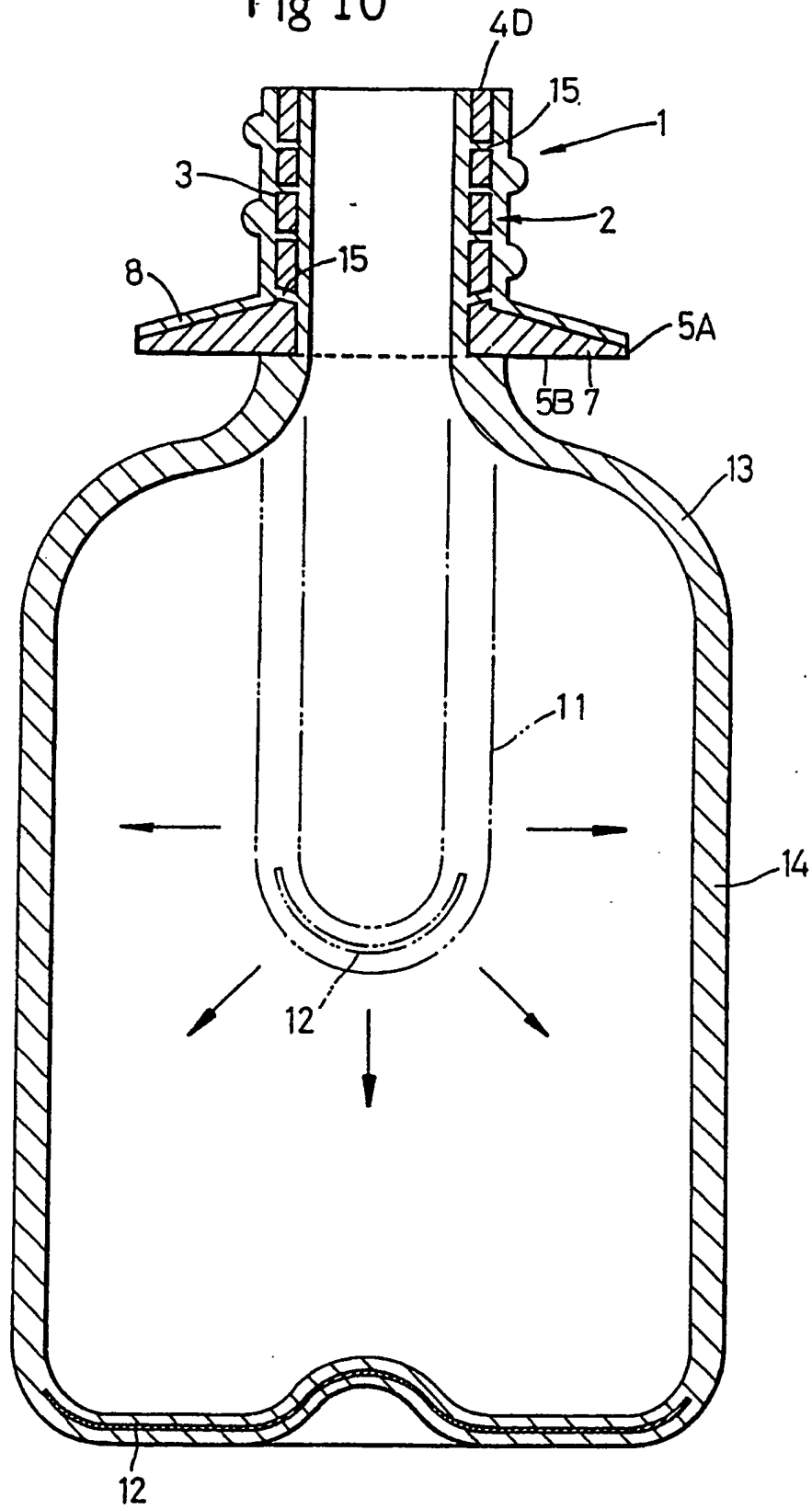


Fig 11A

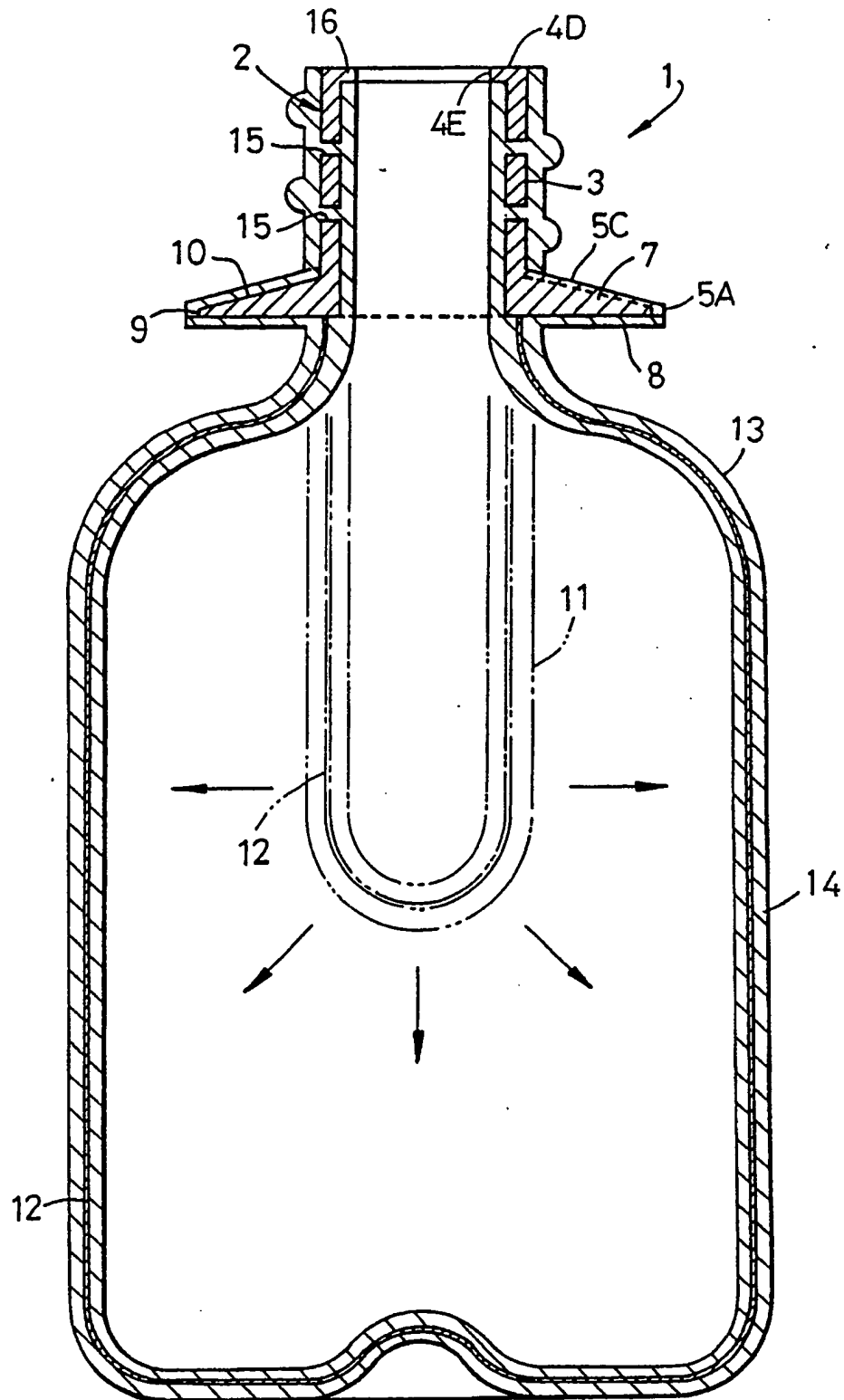


Fig 11B

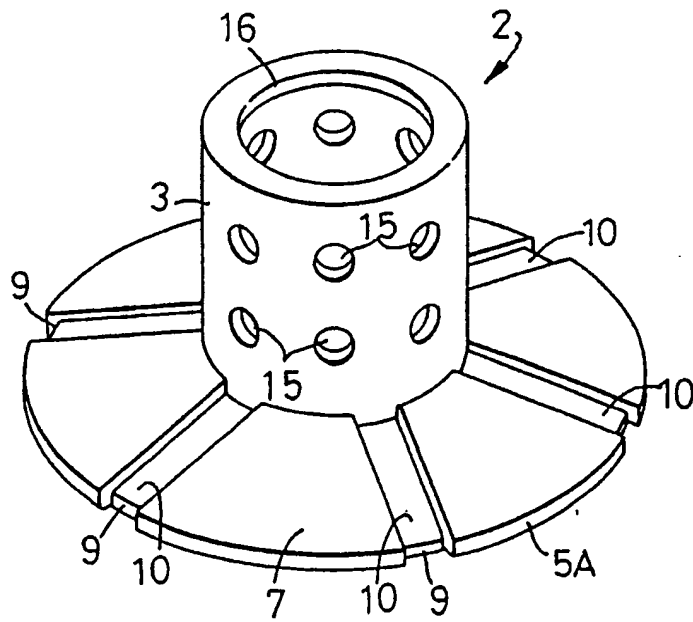


Fig 12A

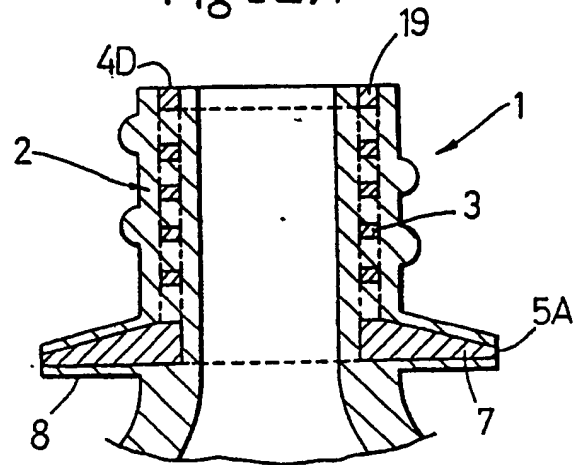


Fig 12B

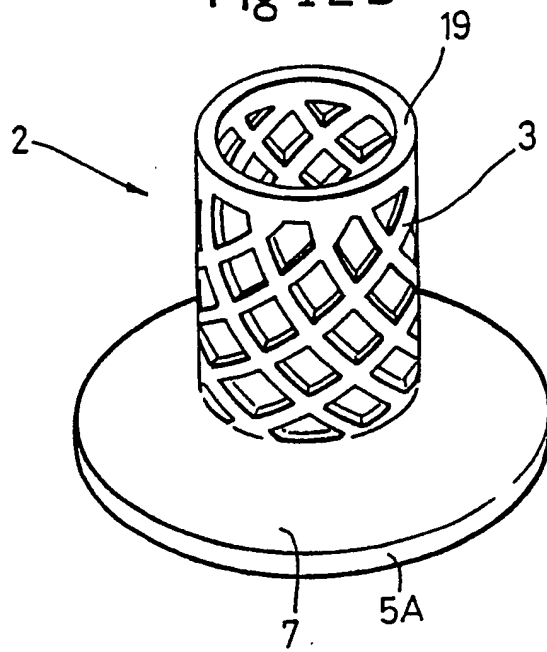


Fig 13A

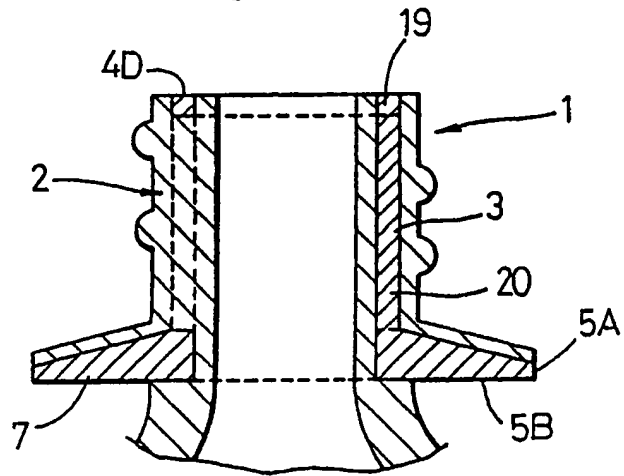
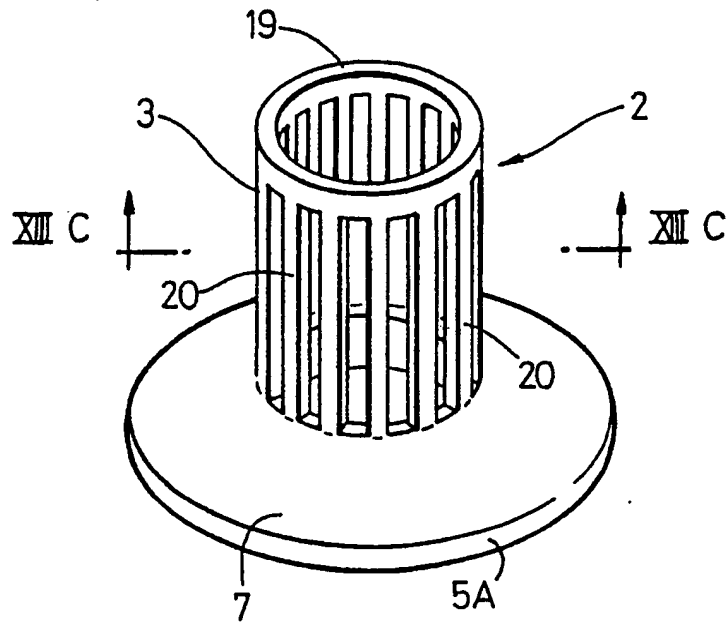
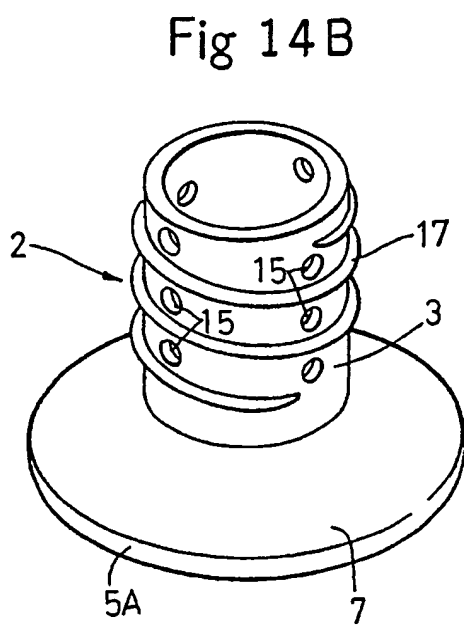
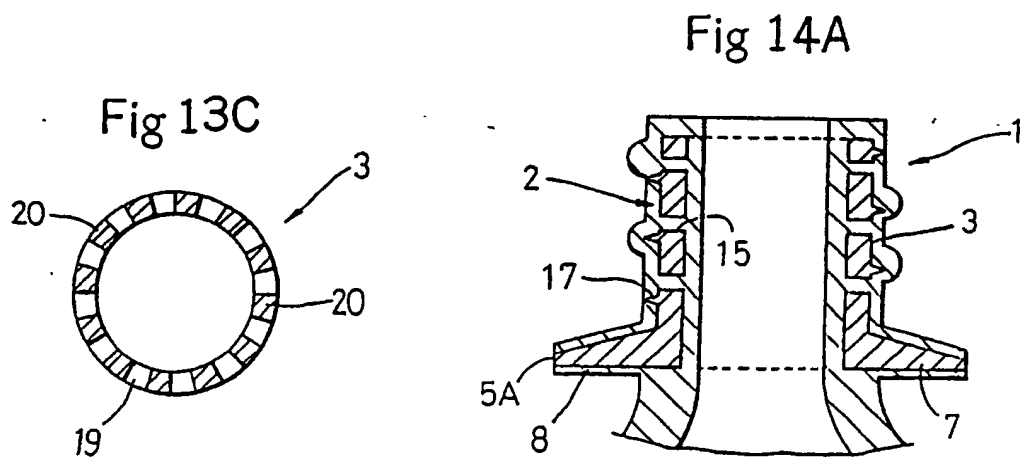


Fig 13B







European
Patent Office

EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number

EP 90 11 4714

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int. Cl.5)
A	EP-A-0 303 718 (NISSEI) * page 6, lines 13-20; figures 3,4 * - - -	1,9,10, 16-18	B 65 D 1/02
A	US-A-4 341 317 (SUZUKI) * column 2, line 47 - column 3, line 45; figures 1-5 * - - - - -	1,9	
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int. Cl.5)
			B 65 D B 29 C
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search Berlin		Date of completion of search 12 October 90	Examiner LORENZ P A
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS X: particularly relevant if taken alone Y: particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A: technological background O: non-written disclosure P: intermediate document T: theory or principle underlying the invention E: earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D: document cited in the application L: document cited for other reasons &: member of the same patent family, corresponding document			